
INDONESIAN SOCIAL CASE STUDIES AND SOCIOGRAPHIC DATA: A LONGITUDINAL TREASURE TROVE

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The University of Sydney's Fisher Library has placed fifty-nine Indonesian social case studies dating from 1959–60 on the Internet. The studies were produced by sociology and anthropology students at the University of Indonesia and Gadjah Mada University under the supervision of Professor Mervyn Jaspán.

Mervyn Jaspán (1926–75), originally from South Africa, earned sociology and anthropology degrees from Natal and Oxford. In 1955, he was appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Gadjah Mada University, in Yogyakarta, and in 1959 he was appointed to the Chair of Sociology at Padjadjaran University, Bandung. He later taught at the Australian National University and the University of Western Australia, before relocating to Hull University, where he died in 1975.

While teaching in Indonesia, Dr. Jaspán supervised the theses of a vast number of anthropology and sociology students at both the University of Padjadjaran and Gadjah Mada University. The theses provide a rich sociographic record of Indonesian village life in 1959–60 and contain information on education, wealth distribution, politics, religion, and social structure. A few of the theses have an urban focus.

When he came to Australia, Dr. Jaspán arranged the microfilming of fifty-nine of the social case studies of his Indonesian students. These materials have now been digitized and are easily accessible on the Internet. The collection includes thirty-seven village studies concerning locations spread throughout Java (fourteen in West Java, fourteen in Central Java, and nine in East Java). There are also a number of ethnic studies carried out in Sumatra, Kalimantan, Nusa Tenggara, and Sulawesi. In addition, this archive offers access to sociological studies of such diverse social groupings as academic staff at a unit of FKIP Bandung, an adult-education committee in Karees, orphaned children in a Tasikmalaya institution, an urban fire brigade, shoe-factory workers, the Chinese community of Magelang, manual workers at a Bandung Home for the Blind, and lottery-ticket vendors in Bandung.

These materials lend themselves most immediately to village longitudinal studies, based on the original data available in these documents, used to examine social, economic, and political change over the past fifty years. The work could be used by undergraduate students studying individual villages for their final-year theses, and also by higher degree students and scholars who might focus on a number of such villages to develop comparative analyses. Quantitative data from thirty-seven of the villages on Java is already available in a comparative form in the appendices of my masters thesis: R. A. Witton, "Schooling and Adult Education in Rural Java: A Comparative Study of 37 Villages" (masters thesis, University of Sydney, 1967), and is available on the internet at:

<http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/1761> .

In Appendix 1 of that study, there are short descriptions of each of the thirty-seven villages, including their respective geographical locations. The study also lists the authors of the Javanese village studies: see pages 383–86.

A community of scholars already interested in follow-up studies of these villages and communities has been developed under the creative leadership of the University of Indonesia's Professor Iwan Pirous (iwan.pirous@gmail.com; pirous@ui.ac.id). The scholars interact through the Internet group he established, a group accessible at datadesa@yahoogroups.com, which is open to new members. It is designed to ensure that the planning for, and eventual results from, further studies of the villages are disseminated among members of the group and within the Indonesian academic community generally.

A full listing of the studies, and .pdf files of the original studies, will be found at: <http://ses.library.usyd.edu.au/handle/2123/5935>